

Casualty Awareness

Commanding Officers,
Sergeants Major,
and their Spouses

FY15 Cornerstone:

The Commandant's Combined Commandership Course

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Varying Casualty Scenarios

- Combat: 6 (FY14)#
- Training/Non-Combat: 39 (FY14)#
- Auto/Motorcycle: 30 [17 / 13] (FY14)*
- Suicide: 26 (FY14)#
- Local / Distant
- Day / Night

*Naval Safety Center Annual Report FY14

#Safety Division Assessment dated 09/18/2014

Vengeance 97/98 Scenario



You get the call...

- CO notifies spouse of mishap.
- Don't give details of mishap until family notifications have been given.
- Very isolated feeling not being able to reach out to anyone, perhaps reach out to CO's boss' spouse for support.

Two messages from the unit

- Message #1: says “Unit X had a mishap, more details to follow.”
- Message #2: Letter from the CO with more details.
 - Immediately following *any* messages being distributed, we highly encourage an OSC/ESC calling tree ...the only message that you need to ever pass is “Check your email.”
- Specific scenario: Vengeance 97/98

The Day of Notification

- The CACO Team (in Service Alphas or equivalent)
 1. Notifier: Senior SNCO or Officer from the deceased Marine's Unit
 2. CACO: A Marine from any unit that will not be deployed, TAD, or PCS within the next year
 3. Chaplain
- As soon as possible after notification the CO, Sergeant Major, FRO, and CO and Sergeant Major spouses should travel to give condolences to local families.



Email & Social Media

- Delete (and make sure FRO deletes) spouses and family members involved from email, Evite, Facebook, etc.
- Designate an Officer's spouse and an Enlisted Marine's spouse who are active on Facebook to monitor for inappropriate comments.

Organization

- Assign Officer from squadron as “Squadron Liaison” AND assign spouse that family is comfortable with as “Spouse Liaison”.
- Daily CACO Sync meetings where all involved CACOs and squadron representatives meet via teleconference to consolidate questions and learn between each other in order to be proactive with each family.

Organization (Cont'd)

- Pull all spouses and Marines together in the days following the mishap to relay details, quash rumors, anger, fears, and promote healing with grief counseling.
- As you focus on the families directly affected, it is easy to lose sight of families who are indirectly affected. Get OSC/ESC together for a spontaneous meeting as soon as possible.

Volunteers

- Keep track of supporters/volunteers.
- There will be an overwhelming number of supporters, keep in mind that 'giving' is a part of the grieving process, and it's your job to make sure that needs and supporters are coordinated in an organized manner.

Volunteers (Cont'd)

- Don't forget Marines in Unit:
 - PIC (other unit CO spouses) is good for using their unit's volunteers to provide food to Marines working around the clock.
- Ask for childcare volunteers during the Memorial Service for the families of the Fallen.

Volunteers (Cont'd)

- Put donation bins in a central location, such as MAG Headquarters' Building.
- Donated gift cards can be used to purchase items for the families such as specific needs and/or gift baskets.
- Out-of-town baskets/bags are nice to put into hotel rooms of traveling family members.

Memorial Service

- Give list of funerals, etc., but ask affected families if services are private or public and be sure to note this on your distributed list.
- Highly encourage giving the flight helmets to the Fallen Marine's children, shadow boxes, scrapbooks, etc.



Memorial Service (Cont'd)

- Find photo to enlarge for the canvas at the Memorial Service. This can be harder than you think, so don't wait until the last minute.
- Compassion Fares: reduced airfare for verified funeral services via airlines, you just need to ask.



Best gift to Fallen Families

- Scrapbooks with handwritten notes and pictures from Marines as gifts to spouses, parents, and fiancées



Follow-up with families

- Yearly letter, phone calls, Fb friends, etc.
- Remembrances



Leadership Role

- You are the Central Communicator and Leader
 - Everyone will look to you for leadership and guidance
 - HHQ, Squadron, & Families
- Squadron Memorial Service takes priority
 - Sasha's birthday (boss reminded me)
 - Pre-Deployment LV plans cancelled
- FRO
- Ask for help
- Family scenarios/reactions will differ
 - Estranged father, spouse 3 months pregnant, fiancée (Not married therefore no \$\$\$ to travel.)
- Fallen Marine's mother and younger son at Memorial